

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

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IN RE:

Tatintsian v. Vorotyntsev, Case No. 1:16-cv-7203-GHW  
Khmaladze v. Vorotyntsev, Case No. 1:16-cv-8029-GHW

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**LEGAL BRIEF IN DEFENSE OF MIKHAIL VOROTYNTSEV AND SHOLINK INC.,  
ARTICULATING A TRANSNATIONAL RICO CONSPIRACY AND REQUESTING  
IMMEDIATE JUDICIAL RELIEF**

**TO THE HONORABLE GREGORY H. WOODS:**

Your Honor,

We appear before you today to unravel a conspiracy so audacious in its scope and so contemptuous of this Court's authority that it has corrupted these proceedings for nearly a decade. The litigation initiated by Gary Tatintsian ("GT") was never a legitimate business dispute. It was a declaration of war, a hostile takeover, and a meticulously planned operation to seize a promising American technology company, ShopLink Inc., and convert it into a high-volume money-laundering vehicle for a transnational criminal enterprise.

This RICO enterprise is led by **Alexey Chepa**, a sanctioned Russian State Duma deputy with known ties to Russian intelligence, and is shielded by the highest levels of Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB).<sup>1</sup> The enterprise's U.S. operations chief is **Andrei Isaev**, co-founder of the Tanuki restaurant chain, who presided over GT and commandeered the weaponized litigation strategy that has plagued this Court. The Tatintsian Gallery was their operational beachhead, and ShopLink was their ultimate prize.<sup>13</sup>

The irrefutable proof of this conspiracy lies in over five hours of secret audio recordings made by GT himself and disclosed in discovery.<sup>13</sup> These recordings, combined with the timeline of the simultaneous collapse of the enterprise's Russian bank, BRT Bank, reveal the true motive: as their primary laundering vehicle was failing in the spring of 2016, the Chepa-led gang needed a new, more sophisticated mechanism.<sup>14</sup> GT sold them on the perfect solution: a "hot US tech company" that could absorb billions in "investment," far surpassing the utility of restaurants or art galleries.<sup>13</sup>

This brief will demonstrate that GT's "war" began the moment he was legally locked into his investment, that his every move was calculated to seize ShopLink for his Russian bosses, and that the subsequent lawsuits filed by Isaev's entities against GT were a deliberate smokescreen to conceal their collusion.<sup>13</sup> We respectfully request that this Court exercise its inherent authority to protect its own integrity from this unprecedented assault.

## I. The Genesis of the Conspiracy: The Secret Recordings and the BRT Bank Collapse

The conspiracy's origins are laid bare by two parallel timelines in the spring of 2016: the implosion of the enterprise's money laundering bank in Russia and GT's covert intelligence gathering operation against MV in New York.

### A. The Motive: A Collapsing Bank and the Need for a New Laundering Vehicle

In May 2016, the Commercial Bank "Bank for Development of Technologies" (BRT), co-owned by Alexey Chepa and Isaev's partners Alexander Sysoev and Vladimir Mukhin, had its license revoked by the Russian Central Bank for systemic violations, including money laundering and asset stripping.<sup>14</sup> The bank's failure left the enterprise with a 1.6 billion ruble liability and an urgent need for a new, legitimate-looking channel to wash and expatriate illicit funds.<sup>19</sup>

### B. The Pitch: GT's Secret Recordings and the "\$100 Billion" Promise

It is against this backdrop of financial desperation in Moscow that GT's actions in New York must be understood. The 5.5 hours of secret recordings he made are not the actions of a legitimate investor, but of an operative gathering intelligence for his superiors.

The most damning of these is the recording from the **April 8, 2016, closing meeting** at the Pryor Cashman office.<sup>13</sup> In this recording, GT is heard forcefully extracting a promise from MV that he would not sell ShopLink for less than **\$100 billion**.

This absurdly inflated figure was not a serious business proposition; it was a sales pitch. This recording was GT's proof of concept for Isaev and Chepa, demonstrating that ShopLink was not just any company, but a high-growth U.S. tech startup with limitless valuation potential—the perfect instrument to absorb and legitimize billions in "investment" from the collapsing BRT Bank and other illicit sources.

## II. The Declaration of War: The Takeover is Triggered

GT's initial posture was one of feigned friendship, designed to bring MV into the enterprise's fold. In a July 31, 2016 email, GT and his co-conspirator YZ attempted to entice MV to travel to Miami to meet with Isaev's "Tanuki" partners, framing it as a casual meeting between friends and successful businessmen.<sup>13</sup> However, MV, already suspicious of GT's associates, refused to go.<sup>13</sup>

This refusal, coupled with GT's realization that he was legally bound to his investment, was the

trigger. According to GT's own deposition testimony, he "went to war" against MV around **July 23, 2016**, precisely when he received formal confirmation from Pryor Cashman that the ShopLink subscription agreement contained no rescission rights and he could not be bought out without his consent.<sup>13</sup> Locked into the company and with his target refusing to be lured into the web, GT went "ballistic" and activated the hostile takeover plan.<sup>13</sup>

The sequence of events that followed was a ruthlessly efficient "smash-and-grab" operation, executed with military precision:

- **September 8, 2016:** The enterprise's shell company, Agnicore LLC, is formed—three days before the resignation of ShopLink's CTO, DK.<sup>13</sup>
- **September 11, 2016:** GT forwards "legal analysis" to DK on how to breach his contracts. That same day, DK resigns, immediately blocks MV's access to all code repositories, and takes the entire development team to Agnicore.<sup>13</sup>
- **October 13, 2016:** DK files his perjured complaint, falsely claiming ownership of ShopLink's core software.<sup>13</sup>
- **December 1, 2016:** The enterprise commits blatant patent theft, filing an application that fraudulently removes MV as the original inventor and assigns ShopLink's intellectual property to Agnicore.<sup>13</sup>

This was not a business dispute; it was a coordinated, pre-meditated seizure of corporate assets, executed on the command of the Chepa-Isaev enterprise after their initial, softer approach failed.

### **III. The Cover-Up: Weaponized Litigation as a Smokescreen**

To conceal the true nature of their collusion and the hostile takeover, the enterprise deployed a final, cynical tactic: weaponized litigation designed to create the illusion of a legitimate conflict between the co-conspirators.

In 2020 and 2023, two lawsuits were filed in this District against GT and his gallery by entities connected to Andrei Isaev: **Leramont LLC** and **Isaev himself**.<sup>13</sup> These lawsuits, alleging millions in damages from failed art transactions, were a strategic feint. Their purpose was to create a public record of animosity between Isaev and GT, thereby obscuring their partnership in the RICO enterprise and providing a cover story for the financial flows between them.

These lawsuits are a classic counter-intelligence tactic, designed to mislead observers and this Court into believing that Isaev and GT were adversaries, when in fact Isaev was the U.S. chief of the operation, presiding over GT's execution of the ShopLink takeover. The claims allowed the enterprise to move money through the gallery under the guise of "repayments" while creating a legal smokescreen for their coordinated racketeering activity.

#### **IV. An Unprecedented Assault on the Integrity of the Court**

The totality of the evidence—the timeline of the BRT Bank collapse, GT's secret recordings, the trigger of the failed Miami meeting, the hostile takeover, and the subsequent cover-up lawsuits—paints a clear and disturbing picture. This Court has been the target of a sophisticated, foreign intelligence-linked criminal operation for nearly a decade.

The enterprise, led by a sanctioned Russian official and protected by the FSB, has:

- **Committed Systematic Perjury:** Knowingly submitting false sworn statements regarding software and patent ownership.<sup>13</sup>
- **Engaged in Racketeering:** Using threats, extortion, and fraud to seize a U.S. company for the purpose of money laundering.<sup>13</sup>
- **Obstructed Justice:** Deliberately destroying evidence and tampering with witnesses to corrupt the factual record.[124, 124]
- **Weaponized the Judiciary:** Using this Court as an instrument to legitimize stolen IP and provide cover for their criminal conspiracy.<sup>13</sup>

This is a profound and unprecedented "fraud on the court" that cannot be tolerated. The very foundation of justice in this District has been attacked.

#### **V. Prayer for Immediate and Decisive Relief**

Your Honor, the defendants have been financially and professionally decimated by this nine-year campaign of racketeering. To allow these proceedings to continue for even one more day would be to allow this Court to remain an unwilling pawn in a foreign criminal scheme. The integrity of the American judiciary demands immediate and decisive intervention.

We respectfully pray that this Court exercise its inherent authority to protect itself and grant the following relief:

1. **Immediate Stay of All Proceedings:** All matters in both *Tatintsian v. Vorotyntsev* (1:16-cv-7203-GHW) and *Khmaladze v. Vorotyntsev* (1:16-cv-8029-GHW) must be immediately stayed to halt the ongoing abuse of process.<sup>13</sup>
2. **Vacatur of All Tainted Judgments:** All prior judgments and orders procured through this systematic fraud must be vacated pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 60(b) and the Court's inherent power to remedy a fraud on the court.<sup>13</sup>
3. **Imposition of Substantial Cash Bonds:** GT, DK, and their counsel must be ordered to post substantial cash bonds of no less than \$1.5 million each to secure potential damages and deter further misconduct, given the history of financial warfare and asset manipulation.<sup>13</sup>

4. **Immediate Disqualification of Counsel:** Counsel for GT and DK must be immediately disqualified for their role as knowing or unwitting facilitators of this criminal enterprise.<sup>13</sup>
5. **Criminal Referral to the Department of Justice:** We implore this Court to make an immediate criminal referral to the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York to investigate this enterprise for violations of the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act, U.S. sanctions laws, and federal statutes against perjury and obstruction of justice.

This Court was targeted by a hostile foreign enterprise. It is now within this Court's power to expose them and defend the rule of law.

Most respectfully submitted,

Mikhail Vorotyntsev, pro se and on behalf of ShopLink Inc.

Dated: June 25, 2025

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